Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAIRO 17702 01 OF 02 231811Z POSS DUPE
ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /025 W
----------231853Z 109573 /42
R 231440Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9974
AMEMBASS DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CAIRO 17702

DAMASCUS FOR CODEL SOLARZ

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (SOLARZ, STEPHEN)
SUBJECT: CODEL SOLARZ MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT

1. CONGRESSMAN STEPHEN SOLARZ ACCOMPANIED BY AMBASSADOR MET WITH PRESIDENT SADAT FOR APPROXIMATELY SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTES DECEMBER 21 SHORTLY AFTER DEPARTURE OF PRESIDENT ASAD. ALSO PRESENT WERE VICE PRESIDENT MUBARAK, PRIME MINISTER SALEM AND DEPPRIMIN/MINFOREIGN AFFAIRS FAHMY. SADAT LED DISCUSSION WITH REFLECTION THAT BOTH U.S. AND EGYPT HAD DONE A GOOD JOB UP TO NOW IN RENEWING RELATIONS AND IN FUTURE HE WANTED TO CONSOLIDATE THOSE RELATIONS. CONGRESSMAN EXPLAINED THAT HIS VISIT CAME IN CONTEXT OF PROSPECT THAT 1977 WILL BE A YEAR OF INTENSE ACTIVITY IN MIDDLE EAST AND HIS BELIEF THAT AS MEMBER OF HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE, HE SHOULD GET FIRST-HAND VIEWS OF AREA LEADERS. MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF CONVERSATION WERE SADAT'S COMMENTS ON FORMULATION OF GUARANTEES IN CONTEXT OF OVERALL PEACE AGREEMENT (PARA 9) AND VIEWS REGARDING LAW OF RETURN TO ISRAEL (PARA 10). THIS SUMMARY NOT YET CLEARED WITH CODEL. REQUEST CODEL REVIEW IT AND ADVISE DEPARTMENT AND CAIRO OF ANY CORRECTIONS OR COMMENTS.

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 17702 01 OF 02 231811Z POSS DUPE

2. SOLARZ ASKED, IN CONTEXT OF OVERALL SETTLEMENT IN WHICH ISRAEL WITHDREW TO 1967 BORDERS AND PALESTINIAN STATE ESTABLISHED ON WEST BANK AND IN GAZA (HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS HYPOTHETICAL PEACE SETTLEMEN), WOULD PRESIDENT BE WILLINT TO PERMIT ISRAELI FORCES TO REMAIN IN SHARM AL-SHEIKH. SADAT SAID HE WOULD, OF COURSE, NEVER PERMIT

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

ISRAELI TROOPS TO REMAIN ON ANY PART OF EGYPTIAN TERRITORY.
HE RECALLED THAT WHEN ELAT HAD BEEN CLOSED IN 1973 IT HAD
NOT BEEN CLOSED FROM SHARM AL-SHEIKH, IT HAD BEEN CLOSED BY
EGYPTIAN ACTIVITY MUCH FURTHER SOUTH. OF WHAT USE, HE ASKED,
IS SHARM AL-SHEIKH WITH A HANDFUL OF ISRAELI SOLDIERS?
SOLARZ REPLIED THAT ISRAELIS CLAIM NAVAL PRESENCE IN SHARM
AL-SHEIKH NECESSARY TO DEFEND AGAINST SUCH MOVES FURTHER
SOUTH. SADAT SAID RED SEA IS ARAB LAKE, ISRAELIS CANNOT
STOP CLOSURE OF ELAT FROM SHARM AL-SHEIKH OR ANYWHERE ELSE.
IN THIS CONTEXT HE SAID HE HAS ALREADY GIVEN HIS WORD
THAT UNCONTINGENT CAN REMAIN IN SHARM AL-SHEIKH WITHOUT
ISRAELI ELEMENTS.

3. WITHIN CONTEXT OF HYPOTHETICAL PEACE SETTLEMENT SOLARZ

ASKED COULD PRESIDENT FORESEE STAGES OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL.
SADAT REPLIED THIS WILL NOT BE A DIFFICULT POINT, IF ISRAEL
AGREES TO EVACUATE TERRITORY. IT WILL BE PURELY TECHNICAL
PROBLEM. HE ADDED THAT HE DOESN'T MEAN YEARS FOR THE
WITHDRAWAL. SADAT REMEMBERED THAT IN 1956 IT TOOK ABOUT THREE
MONTHS FOR ISRAEL AND BRITAIN TO WITHDRAW FROM SINAI AND
SAID THIS WOULD BE A REASONABLE TIME. SOLARZ ASKED ABOUT
POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER INTERIM STEPS SHOULD ISRAEL PROVE
UNWILLING TO WITHDRAW. SADAT SAID THAT STEP BY STEP APPROACH
IS NOW ENDED AND QUOTE GLOBAL SOLUTION UNQUOTE LEADING TO
A PERMANENT PEACE MUST BE SOUGHT.

4. SOLARZ ASKED AGAIN WITHIN CONTEXT OF HYPOTHETICAL
PEACE SETTLEMENT, WOULD EGYPT AND OTHER STATES BE WILLING
TO ACKNOWLEDGE RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO EXIST. SADAT REPLIED
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 17702 01 OF 02 231811Z POSS DUPE

THAT QUESTION WAS BIASED. HE POSED THAT IF HE IS WILLING
TO NEGOTIATE AND SIGN PEACE AGREEMENT IN GENEVA WITH ISRAEL,
WOULD HE SIGN WITH A GHOST? SUCH AGREEMENT MEANS ISRAEL IS

A FACT. SOLARZ POINTED OUT POSSIBLE AMBIGUITY, NAMELY WHEN
FOREIGN STATE IS RECOGNIZED IT IS REALITY BUT THAT DOES NOT
NECESSARILY MEAN IT HAS RIGHT TO EXIST. SADAT REPLIED "WHEN
I SAY WE ARE READY TO GO ON AN EQUAL FOOTING, I MEAN IT."
BASIS OF NEGOTIATIONS WILL BE RESOLUTION 242; THIS QUESTION
WILL BE ANSWERED IN NEGOTIATIONS. SOLARZ CONTINUING ON SAME
POINT SAID THAT WHILE ARABS SAY PALESTINIAN PROBLEM IS CORE
OF MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT, ISRAELIS SAY REFUSAL OF ARABS TO
RECOGNIZE RIGHT OF EXISTENCE IS MAJOR PROBLEM. SADAT
REJECTED THIS IDEA, SAYING ISRAELIS ALREADY HAVE RECOGNITION.
HE THEN RELATED STORY OF ROGERS MISSION IN 1971 WHEN SECRETARY
ROGERS, ACCOMPANIED BY SISCO, HAD COME TO THE AREA. GOLDA
MEIR HAD TOLD ROGERS THAT IF HE COULD GET ARAB LEADER TO

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

DECLARE READINESS TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL, SHE WOULD QUOTE PUT
ALL OUR CARDS ON THE TABLE UNQUOTE. ROGERS CAME TO CAIRO AND
SADAT AGREED TO MAKE OFFICIAL STATEMENT TO THIS EFFECT, I.E.,
EGYPT READY TO SIGN PEACE AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL. THIS WAS
FIRST TIME ANY ARAB LEADER HAD MADE SUCH STATEMENT. ROGERS
RETURNED TO ISRAEL, BUT MEIR ONLY REBUKED HIM IN
KNESSET. SINCE 1971, SADAT REITERATED, I HAVE SAID
MANY TIMES I AM READY TO SIGN PEACE AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL.

5. WITHIN CONTEXT OF HYPOTHETICAL PEACE SETTLEMENT, SOLARZ
ASKED IF ARABS WOULD BE WILLING TO CALL OFF BOYCOTT OF
ISRAEL, AS MANIFESTATION OF NEW ATMOSPHERE. SADAT REPLIED
THAT BOYCOTT IS SIDE ISSUE. MAIN PROBLEM NOW IS TO END
STATE OF BELLIGERENCY AND ESTABLISH PEACE. ALL OTHER ISSUES
WILL BE SOLVED IN THAT CONTEXT. SADAT REMINDED SOLARZ THAT
HE HAD ALREADY AGREED TO PERMIT NON-STRATEGIC CARGOES TO
PASS THROUGH CANAL. CONCENTRATION SHOULD NOW BE ON ACTUAL
PEACE AGREEMENT. SOLARZ REPLIED THAT FROM POLITICAL POINT OF
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PAGE 04 CAIRO 17702 01 OF 02 231811Z POSS DUPE

VIEW ISRAEL LEADERS MUST BE ABLE TO SELL PEACE TREATY TO
ISRAELI PEOPLE. THERE MUST BE TANGIBLE MANIFESTATION OF
ARAB GOOD WILL-- FOR EXAMPLE, TRADING AND TOURISM. SADAT
REJECTED THESE IDEAS, SAYING THAT THIS WOULD MEAN IMPOSITION
OF ISRAELI CONDITIONS, E.G., TRADING, TOURISM, AND DIPLOMATIC
RELATIONS WHICH ARE ELEMENTS OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND
CANNOT BE COMPROMISED. BOYCOTT IS SIDE ISSUE IN THIS
CONTEXT. EGYPT WILL AGREE TO END STATE OF BELLIGERENCY AND
THIS WILL MEAN NORMALIZATION OF WHOLE ATMOSPHERE IN AREA.
SOLARZ ASKED IF HOSTILE PROPAGANDA WOULD CEASE. SADAT
READILY AGREED, SAYING THAT THIS WAS LIKE BOYCOTT SIDE
ISSUE. SOLARZ ASKED SADAT TO CLARIFY HIS STATEMENT ON
BOYCOTT; NAMELY, WOULD HE END PRIMARY BOYCOTT AND TRADE WITH
ISRAEL. SADAT REITERATED THAT IN TERMS OF NATIONAL
SOVEIGNTY EGYPT CANNOT BE FORCED TO DO BUSINESS WITH
ISREAL.

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 17702 02 OF 02 231622Z
ACTION H-03

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

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INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /025 W
---------- 108031 /44
R 231440Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CAIRO 17702

DAMASCUS FOR CODEL SOLARZ

6. SOLARZ RECALLED THAT MANY ARAB LEADERS HAD SAID THAT IN LONG RUN, PRECONDITION FOR LASTING PEACE IS THAT ISRAEL BECOME PART OF REGION. IS NOT DESIRE FOR TRADE AND TOURISM THEREFORE REAL MANIFESTATION THAT ISRAELIS WANT TO BE PART OF REGION? SADAT REPEATED THAT TRADE AND TOURISM, ETC., CANNOT BE FORCED IN AGREEMENT. AFTER 1967, EVEN THOUGH ARABS HAD BEEN DEFEATED MILITARILY, ISRAELIS COULD NOT IMPOSE POLITICAL CONDITIONS.

7. SOLARZ REMARKED ON HIS TRIP PREVIOUS DAY TO CANAL AND IMPRESSIVE RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT, INCREASED SUEZ CANAL REVENUES, AND RETURN OF SUEZ RESIDENTS. (SADAT TOOK OCCASION TO AGAIN EXPRESS DEEP GRATITUDE FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE IN CLEARING THE CANAL). SOLARZ CONTINUED THAT SADAT HAD SAID IF NEGOTIATIONS UNSUCCESSFUL AND WAR BREAKS OUT, CANAL MAY BE CLOSED AND CITIES DESTROYED. SOLARZ WONDERED IF SADAT WILLING TO RISK CANAL DEVELOPMENT IN ANOTHER WAR. SADAT REPLIED THAT IF ISRAEL RETURNS TO OLD "ARROGANCE" AND REFUSES TO WITHDRAW, EGYPT AS OCCUPIED STATE IS ENTITLED TO GO TO WAR TO RECLAIM ITS TERRITORY. HOWEVER, HE INVITED SOLARZ TO REVIEW PREAMBLE OF SINAI II DISENGAGEMENT, CONTAINING COMMITMENT NOT TO RESORT TO USE OF FORCE. THIS HAD BEEN MADE WITHIN CONTEXT OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. HE ALSO REMINDED SOLARZ THAT WHEN HE HAD OPENED CANAL CITIES THEY CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 17702 02 OF 02 231622Z

WERE STILL WITHIN RANGE OF ISRAELI GUNS. HE HAD TAKEN RISKS, THEREFORE, BEFORE IN SEARCH OF PEACE AND WAS WILLING TO CONTINUE TO DO SO.

8. SOLARZ RECAPITULATED RECENT CONVERSATION WITH HUSSEIN IN WHICH HUSSEIN SAW FUTURE SOLVING OF PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WITHOUT PLO. HUSSEIN HAD INVOLKED LEBANESE EXPERIENCE AS INDICATION OF HIS POSITION ON PLO AND HAD TOLD SOLARZ THAT ASAD HAD SAID PLO IS BECOMING MORE TROUBLE THAN THEY ARE WORTH. SADAT DISAGREED WITH HUSSEIN'S ANALYSIS. HE SAID THAT HISTORIC STEPS HAD BEEN TAKEN DURING HIS MEETINGS WITH ASAD IN WHICH NEW COOPERATION AND COORDIATION WOULD LEAD EGYPT AND SYRIA TO "BE ONE NATION". ISRAELIS THOUGHT THEY COULD

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

BUILD ON RIFT BETWEEN EGYPT AND SYRIA, BUT EGYPT AND
SYRIA ARE NOW CLOSER TO UNITY THAN EVER BEFORE. SOLARZ
OPENED THAT, IN CONTEXT HYPOTHETICAL PEACE, IT WOULD BE HARD
TO CONCEIVE IF ISRAELIS AGREEING TO PALESTINIAN STATE
WITHOUT PLO RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST. SADAT
SAID HE WELCOMED THIS STATEMENT. SINCE 1948 PALESTINIANS HAD
BEEN DENIED EVEN BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS. SADAT'S POSITION
HAS ALWAYS BEEN THAT ONCE PALESTINIANS ARE GIVEN STATE, THEY
CAN BE ASKED TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL. FOLLOWING AGREEMENT ON
PALESTINIAN STATE, PALESTINIANS CAN BE ASKED THIS QUESTION,
EVEN IN GENEVA. SOLARZ WONDERED WHAT ANSWER WOULD BE; SADAT
SAID HE DID NOT SPEAK FOR PALESTINIANS. HE PROMISED DO HIS
BEST HOWEVER TO GAIN SUCH AGREEMENT.

9. SOLARZ THEN REMARKED THAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SINAI
II DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT AND APROPOSED PEACE AGREEMENT
SEEM SMALL AND ASKED SADAT TO DESCRIBE HOW NEXT STEP
WOULD BE DIFFERENT. SADAT DESCRIBED "OBLIGATIONS" WHICH
EXIST UNDER RESOLUTION 242 AND WHICH MUST BE FULFILLED
FOR LASTING PEACE. PREAMBLE OF SINAI II DISENGAGEMENT
MAY BE USED AS "PRINCIPLE IN GLOBAL SOLUTION" AS WELL.
IN PEACE AGREEMENT THERE WOULD BE GUARANTEES. EGYPT
WOULD NOT OPPOSE US GUARANTEES FOR ISRAEL, EVEN IN
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 17702 02 OF 02 231622Z

FORM OF "PACT BETWEEN U.S. AND ISRAEL". EGYPT, HOWEVER,
WOULD NOT SEEK SUCH PACT WITH UNITED STATES. SOLARZ
ASKED WHAT FORM OTHER GUARANTEES MIGHT TAKE. SADAT
REPLIED, PERHAPS DEMILITARIZED OCEAN ZONES AND U.N.
CONTINGENTS STAYING ON BORDERS TO ASSURE SAFETY. SADAT
REITERATED THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT SEEK FORMAL AGREEMENT
WITH U.S. BASED ON PRINCIPLES NON-ALIGNMENT. FOREIGN
MINISTER FAHMY CAME INTO CONVERSATION AT THIS POINT
TO CLARIFY THAT PRESIDENT SPOKE OF TWO TYPES OF
GUARANTEES, ONE ON GROUND AND SECOND IN FORM OF POLITICAL
GUARANTEES. POLITICAL GUARANTEES WOULD BE DECLARATIONS
FROM U.S. AND OTHER GUARANTEEING BORDERS FOR BOTH SIDES.
SOLARZ ASKED WOULD THIS NOT BE THE SAME AS FORMAL PACT?
SADAT REPLIED IT WOULD NOT SINCE PACT MIGHT GIVE RIGHT
FOR U.S. TO STATION FORCES TO WHICH EGYPT OBJECTS.
EGYPT WOULD NOT DISAGREE WITH SUCH PACT FOR ISRAELIS.
SOLARZ ASKED SADAT IF HE WOULD OBJECT TO SATATIONING
US TROOPS IN TEL AVIV; SADAT SAID HE WOULD NOT
OBJECT.

10. SOLARZ THEN ASKED OF SADAT BELIEVED THAT IN
FINAL CONTEXT OF PEACE AGREEMENT ISRAEL SHOULD REPEAL
LAW OF RETURN. SADAT SAID THAT WITHIN 1967 BORDERS,
ISRAEL IS FREE TO DO WHATEVER IT WANTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976CAIRO17702
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760471-0383
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761214/aaaaalzg.tel
Line Count: 277
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL SOLARZ MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SADAT
TAGS: OREP, PFOR, EG, US, (SOLARZ, STEPHEN), (SADAT, ANWAR)
To: STATE DAMASCUS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006